Panel Urges Investigation in C.I.A. Officer's Death

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 24 — The Senate Intelligence Committee today asked the Justice Department to investigate a number of "troubling questions" that it had been unable to answer in its own investigation into the death of John A. Paisley, the former Central Intelligence Agency analyst whose body was found floating in Chesapeake Bay last autumn.

A spokesman for the committee, Spencer Davis, said he could not discuss what sort of "troubling questions" the committee wanted answered, but he said that the committee and its staff felt the questions were such that a referral of the matter to the Federal Bureau of Investigaion was "a legitimate course of action."

The body of Mr. Paisley, who had been shot in the head with a 9-millimeter bullet, was found in the bay one week after his boat, the "Brillig," had run aground on the western shore of Chesapeake Bay. The Maryland state police concluded after an investigation that he probably had committed suicide.

Since Mr. Paisley's death, however, a number of news organizations have raised questions about the apparent suicide, noting that Mr. Paisley had continued to do sensitive work for the Central Intelligence Agency after his retirement from the agency in 1974, and suggesting that perhaps Soviet intelligence agents were somehow involved.

As a result of a number of problems concerning identification of the body, which was badly bloated and decomposed, questions were also raised about whether it actually was the body of the former C.I.A. officer.

Although no one connected with the Senate committee would openly discuss the matter, one Government source said that the committee did not doubt that the body recovered was that of Mr. Paisley. "We don't think that he's going to show up in Red Square," he said.

Because of the sensitive nature of Mr. Paisely's work for the agency, which involved assessments of Soviet strategic strength, and because there were no witnesses to confirm that he had committed suicide, the Senate committee began an inquiry of its own last October.

Yesterday, Senator Birch Bayh, the Indiana Democrat who heads the committee, told Attorney General Griffin B. Bell in a telephone conversation that some questions still were unanswered, and that he wanted the F.B.I. to take another look at the case.

A spokesman for Mr. Bell, Terrence Adamson, said there was some question about whether the F.B.I. has jurisdiction in the case, but that it might be able to investigate the matter as a crime on the high seas or as a possible counterintelligence matter.